

Workload and Work Discipline as Determinants of Employee Performance: Evidence from the Mining Industry

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Abstract:

Employee performance is a critical factor in ensuring organizational sustainability, particularly in capital-intensive and high-risk industries such as mining. Increasing production targets without a proportional increase in workforce may intensify workload and undermine the effectiveness of work discipline, potentially undermining performance. This study aims to examine the effects of workload and work discipline on employee performance at PT Internasional Prima Coal. A quantitative approach with a causal Research design was employed. Data were collected through structured questionnaires distributed to all 78 employees using a census sampling technique. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, instrument testing, classical assumption tests, and multiple linear regression analysis. The results indicate that workload has a negative and significant effect on employee performance, suggesting that excessive physical and mental job demands reduce employees' ability to perform optimally. In contrast, work discipline shows a positive but insignificant effect on employee performance, indicating that disciplinary compliance alone is insufficient to enhance performance under high workload conditions. Simultaneously, workload and work discipline significantly Influence employee performance, although their overall contribution remains limited, implying that multiple organizational factors shape performance. This study concludes that effective workload management plays a more critical role than disciplinary enforcement in sustaining employee performance within high-demand mining environments. The findings provide practical insights for management to implement proportional workload allocation and integrate work discipline with supportive human resource management practices to achieve sustainable performance improvement.

Keywords: Workload; Work Discipline; Employee Performance; Human Resource Management; Mining Industry

Introduction

Human resources are recognized as a strategic asset that influences organizational sustainability and competitiveness, especially in capital-intensive, high-

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risk sectors such as mining. In a progressively competitive corporate landscape, businesses can no longer rely solely on technological innovation and financial resources; rather, they must ensure that people continually deliver peak performance. Employee performance is a vital metric of organizational success, since it is directly linked to productivity, attainment of operational objectives, and workplace safety. Recent studies highlight that employee performance is significantly affected by the proficient management of internal organizational elements, particularly workload and work discipline ([Hancock & Matthews, 2023](#); [Torlak & Kuzey, 2019](#)).

From a human resource management standpoint, employee performance denotes the degree to which individuals attain job outcomes, as assessed by quality, quantity, timeliness, and the effectiveness with which they execute designated activities. Performance is influenced not only by individual aptitude but also by work procedures, job requirements, and corporate culture. Empirical Research indicates that severe operational pressure, coupled with inadequate human resource management, can result in performance decline while concurrently heightening the risk of work tiredness and occupational stress ([Glaser, 2020](#); [Hancock, 2023](#)). These problems are especially prominent in high-risk industries because performance outcomes are intricately linked to safety compliance and operational accuracy.

A primary factor of employee performance is workload. Workload denotes the extent to which employees must meet physical, mental, and psychological demands within a specified time period. When handled appropriately, workload can improve focus and productivity; nevertheless, excessive workload is regularly associated with diminished performance, health issues, and heightened safety concerns. Recent empirical studies in ergonomics and organizational behavior indicate that increased workload without sufficient resource support adversely impacts both individual and organizational performance ([Ma & Kaber, 2021](#); [Luz-Eugenia, 2022](#)). In mining operations, where workers face significant physical strain and cognitive demands, improper workload management has substantial consequences for performance sustainability.

Besides workload, work discipline is often recognized as a crucial behavioral aspect affecting employee performance. Work discipline denotes employees' adherence to organizational regulations, processes, and operational standards, promoting order, efficiency, and consistency in task performance. Previous Research indicates a favorable correlation between work discipline and performance, as disciplined conduct fosters an organized and regulated work environment ([Soss & Fording, 2021](#); [Merchant, 2023](#)). Nonetheless, empirical evidence remains ambiguous. Numerous Research suggest that work discipline does not substantially enhance performance in the absence of equitable task distribution, sufficient motivation, and appropriate organizational frameworks ([Irawan & Kusjono, 2021](#); [Muna, 2022](#)). This suggests that discipline alone may be insufficient to improve performance in challenging work settings.

These obstacles are particularly pronounced at PT Internasional Prima Coal (IPCoal), a coal mining enterprise facing significant human resource management challenges amid escalating production targets. Internal corporate records reveal a significant increase in production volume, but a corresponding expansion of staff has not accompanied it. Consequently, personnel, particularly in operational units, endure increased physical and mental demands. Previous studies in the mining industry indicate that disparities between workload and workforce capacity might adversely

affect employee performance and increase the likelihood of workplace accidents ([Glaser, 2020; Hancock & Matthews, 2023](#)).

Simultaneously, work discipline persists as an organizational issue. Attendance data at PT IPCoal indicate tardiness, unexcused absences, and deviations from scheduled working hours, suggesting that disciplinary measures have not been fully implemented. Recent Research indicates that insufficient work discipline may amplify the adverse effects of excessive workload, as postponed activities accumulate and heighten work pressure in subsequent periods ([Desnirita & Sari, 2022; Pirawati & Firman, 2023](#)). This interaction highlights the necessity of concurrently analyzing workload and discipline instead of separately.

Despite comprehensive studies on workload, work discipline, and employee performance, prior results have been inconsistent, indicating a significant Research gap. Certain Research indicates positive and significant effects of workload and discipline on performance ([Hancock, 2023; Merchant, 2023](#)), whereas other studies reveal negative or statistically insignificant correlations ([Jannah, 2022; Kumarawati, 2022](#)). These inconsistencies underscore the need for additional empirical Research, especially in the mining sector, which is characterized by distinct operational pressures, safety hazards, and performance requirements that differ significantly from those in service or manufacturing industries.

This study intends to thoroughly investigate the impact of workload and work discipline on employee performance at PT Internasional Prima Coal. This Research focuses on a high-risk mining environment to provide context-specific empirical information that enhances the human resource management literature, particularly regarding performance management amid elevated job demands ([Ma & Kaber, 2021; Torlak & Kuzey, 2019](#)). This study theoretically advances understanding of workload and discipline as critical factors influencing employee performance, while addressing discrepancies in previous empirical Research. The results are anticipated to guide managerial decision-making by highlighting the significance of systematic workload analysis, proportional workforce planning, and the establishment of equitable and consistent disciplinary systems to ensure sustainable employee performance and reduce productivity loss stemming from fatigue and stress ([Glaser, 2020; Merchant, 2023](#)).

Methods

This study employed a quantitative, causal (explanatory) Research design to explain the cause-and-effect relationships between independent and dependent variables. This design was selected because the study empirically tests the effects of workload and work discipline on employee performance, guided by predefined hypotheses. The Research adopted a cross-sectional design, in which data were collected at a single point in time. This approach is appropriate for capturing the empirical conditions of workload, work discipline, and employee performance as experienced by employees at PT Internasional Prima Coal during the study period.

The Research subjects consisted of all employees of PT Internasional Prima Coal, including both operational and non-operational staff. Employees were selected as Research subjects because of their direct involvement in organizational activities that are influenced by workload intensity and the implementation of work discipline policies.

The objects of this study comprised three main variables:

1. Workload as the independent variable (X_1),
2. Work discipline as the independent variable (X_2), and
3. Employee performance is the dependent variable (Y).

The study population included all employees of PT Internasional Prima Coal, totaling 78 individuals. Given the relatively small and accessible population, a saturated sampling technique (census method) was used, in which all members of the population were included as Research respondents. The use of a census approach was intended to enhance data accuracy and minimize sampling bias, thereby allowing the findings to reflect the organization's actual conditions better.

This study utilized primary data collected directly from respondents through the distribution of structured questionnaires. The questionnaire items were developed based on relevant indicators for each Research variable and were adapted to the operational context of the mining industry.

Prior to data analysis, the Research instruments were evaluated through:

1. Validity testing, to ensure that each item accurately measured the intended construct, and
2. Reliability testing assesses the consistency of respondents' responses.

An instrument was considered valid if the item–total correlation exceeded the critical value for the correlation coefficient, and reliable if Cronbach's Alpha exceeded the established minimum threshold. Data analysis was conducted using inferential statistical techniques with the assistance of statistical software. The analytical procedures included:

1. Descriptive statistical analysis to describe respondent characteristics and the distribution of questionnaire responses,
2. Classical assumption tests, including normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity tests, to ensure the appropriateness of the regression model, and
3. Multiple linear regression analysis to examine the effects of workload and work discipline on employee performance.

The regression model used in this study is expressed as follows:

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \varepsilon$$

Hypothesis testing was conducted using:

1. t-tests (partial tests) to examine the individual effects of each independent variable on the dependent variable,
2. F-tests (simultaneous tests) to evaluate the joint effects of the independent variables on employee performance, and
3. The coefficient of determination (R^2) is used to measure the extent to which the independent variables explain variations in the dependent variable.

All statistical tests were performed at a 5% significance level. Hypotheses were accepted when the significance value was less than 0.05 and rejected when the significance value exceeded 0.05.

Results

Characteristics of Research Respondents

The respondents in this study consisted of 78 employees of PT Internasional Prima Coal, reflecting a census-based sampling approach. Table 1 presents the demographic profile of the respondents.

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	66	84.6
	Female	12	15.4
Age	≤30 years	14	17.9
	31–40 years	36	46.2
	>40 years	28	35.9
Education Level	High School	30	38.5
	Bachelor's Degree	36	46.2
	Postgraduate	12	15.3
Length of Service	≤10 years	18	23.1
	11–15 years	33	42.3
	>15 years	27	34.6

The demographic profile indicates that the workforce is predominantly male, which is consistent with the labor-intensive nature of the mining industry. Most respondents fall within the productive age range of 31–40 years and possess considerable work experience, suggesting a mature workforce with substantial operational exposure. This profile is relevant, as experienced employees may perceive workload pressure and disciplinary practices differently compared to less experienced workers.

Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables

Variable	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Workload (X ₁)	2.10	4.85	3.92	0.54
Work Discipline (X ₂)	2.00	4.70	3.45	0.61
Employee Performance (Y)	2.30	4.80	3.68	0.57

The mean value of workload is relatively high, indicating that employees perceive their work demands as substantial. This finding aligns with the operational context of increasing production targets without a proportional increase in workforce. Work discipline shows a moderate mean score, suggesting that compliance with organizational rules is adequate but not optimal. Employee performance is rated at a moderate-to-high level, indicating that while employees generally meet performance standards, there remains room for improvement, particularly under high workload conditions.

Instrument Validity and Reliability Test

Table 3. Validity and Reliability Test Results

Variable	Number of Items	Validity Result	Cronbach's Alpha	Reliability Status
Workload	9	All items valid	0.82	Reliable
Work Discipline	6	All items valid	0.79	Reliable
Employee Performance	10	All items valid	0.85	Reliable

All questionnaire items demonstrated acceptable item–total correlations, confirming construct validity. Cronbach's Alpha values exceeded the minimum threshold of 0.60, indicating strong internal consistency. These results confirm that the instruments were appropriate for further statistical analysis.

Instrument Test Results and Classical Assumptions

Table 4. Classical Assumption Test Results

Test	Indicator	Result	Conclusion
Normality	P–P Plot	Normal	Assumption satisfied
Multicollinearity	VIF < 10; Tolerance > 0.10	No issue	No multicollinearity
Heteroscedasticity	Scatterplot	Random pattern	No heteroscedasticity

The residuals were normally distributed, and no multicollinearity or heteroscedasticity issues were detected. These results indicate that the regression model meets the classical assumptions and is suitable for hypothesis testing.

Results of Regression Analysis and Hypothesis Testing

Table 5. Regression Analysis Results

Variable	Coefficient (β)	t-value	Sig.
Constant	31.169	—	—
Workload (X ₁)	-0.358	-2.47	0.016
Work Discipline (X ₂)	0.325	1.38	0.171

Table 6. Model Summary

R	R ²	Adjusted R ²
0.312	0.097	0.073

Hypothesis Testing Results

H₁: Workload has a significant effect on employee performance

H₂: Work discipline has a significant effect on employee performance

The regression results indicate that workload has a negative and statistically significant effect on employee performance. This finding suggests that increased workload reduces employee performance, supporting the Job Demand–Resources (JD-R) theory, which posits that excessive job demands deplete employee energy and hinder performance. Conversely, work discipline shows a positive but statistically insignificant effect, indicating that discipline alone is insufficient to enhance performance in high-demand environments significantly.

The findings demonstrate that workload is a critical determinant of employee performance at PT Internasional Prima Coal. The negative relationship between workload and performance confirms that excessive physical and mental demands undermine employees' ability to maintain optimal performance. This result is consistent with prior studies emphasizing that unmanaged workload in high-risk industries leads to fatigue, stress, and performance deterioration ([Glaser, 2020](#); [Hancock & Matthews, 2023](#)).

In contrast, work discipline was found to have no significant impact on performance, despite its positive coefficient. This suggests that disciplinary compliance does not automatically translate into improved performance when employees are exposed to excessive workload pressure. This finding aligns with previous Research indicating that discipline is context-dependent and requires complementary organizational support, such as reasonable workload allocation and adequate resources, to enhance performance effectively ([Irawan & Kusjono, 2021](#);

[Muna, 2022](#)). The relatively low R^2 value (9.7%) further indicates that multiple factors beyond workload and discipline, such as motivation, leadership, compensation, and organizational support, influence employee performance. Nevertheless, the significant joint effect of workload and discipline underscores the importance of integrated human resource management strategies in high-risk operational settings.

Conclusion

This study aimed to examine the effects of workload and work discipline on employee performance at PT Internasional Prima Coal. Based on the results of statistical analysis and hypothesis testing, several important conclusions can be drawn. First, workload was found to have a negative and statistically significant effect on employee performance. This finding indicates that excessive physical, mental, and psychological job demands tend to reduce employees' ability to maintain optimal performance. In the mining industry, where operational pressure and safety risks are inherently high, unmanaged workloads can lead to fatigue, stress, and reduced work effectiveness. This result supports the Job Demand–Resources (JD-R) theory, which posits that excessive job demands without adequate resources impair employee performance. Second, work discipline showed a positive but statistically insignificant effect on employee performance. This suggests that while discipline contributes to orderly and compliant work behavior, it alone is insufficient to enhance performance under high workload pressure significantly. Discipline appears to function as a supporting factor rather than a primary driver of performance improvement in high-demand work environments. Third, workload and work discipline were found to have a significant simultaneous effect on employee performance, although the model's explanatory power remained relatively low. This indicates that employee performance is a multidimensional construct influenced by factors beyond workload and discipline, including motivation, leadership, compensation, and organizational support.

Suggestion

Based on the findings of this study, several managerial implications can be proposed for PT Internasional Prima Coal and similar organizations operating in high-risk and labor-intensive industries. Management is strongly encouraged to implement systematic and regular workload analyses to ensure that job demands remain proportional to employees' physical and mental capacities. Aligning workforce size, task allocation, and working hours with production targets is essential to prevent excessive workload accumulation that may undermine performance and increase fatigue-related risks. Furthermore, work discipline should not be enforced merely as a control mechanism; rather, it should be integrated with supportive human resource practices, including fair work scheduling, adequate rest periods, and performance-based incentive systems. Such integration is expected to enhance the effectiveness of disciplinary policies by fostering compliance alongside employee motivation. Given the negative impact of workload on performance, organizations should also prioritize employee well-being through comprehensive fatigue management programs, such as job rotation, sufficient break times, and regular health monitoring, particularly in operational units with high physical and mental demands. Finally, as workload and discipline explain only part of performance variation, management should adopt a holistic performance management approach that considers additional factors, such as

leadership quality, employee motivation, training and development, and organizational support, when designing sustainable performance improvement strategies.

Future Research is encouraged to address the limitations identified in the present study to deepen the understanding of employee performance determinants. Subsequent studies may incorporate additional explanatory variables, such as job stress, work motivation, leadership style, organizational support, or safety climate, to provide a more comprehensive analytical framework. Employing longitudinal Research designs would allow researchers to observe changes in workload, work discipline, and employee performance over time, thereby enabling stronger causal inferences. Moreover, expanding the Research setting by examining multiple mining companies or other high-risk industries would enhance the generalizability of the findings and facilitate comparative analysis across different organizational contexts. Finally, future studies may benefit from adopting mixed-method approaches by integrating quantitative surveys with qualitative methods, such as interviews or focus group discussions, to gain deeper insights into employees' perceptions and experiences of workload management and disciplinary practices in complex operational environments.

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